

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 INR-07 EB-07 MC-02 OMB-01 ACDA-05

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R 161040Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9788

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDOC WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EALR, ESTC, CZ

SUBJECT: AIRCRAFT: CSSR INTEREST INBOEING 707

1. IN MARCH 11 CALL HE REQUESTED, PETER EHRENWALD, BOING DIRECTOR OF INTERNALTIONAL SALES IN MUNICH, BRIEFED ECONOFF ON BOEING'S EFFORTS TO SELL ONE USED 707 AIRCRAFT TO SLOVAIR, THE SECOND CZECHOSLOVAK PASSENGER AND CARGO AIRLINE. NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR OVER A YEAR, AND HE IS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE SALE WILL BE CONSUMMATED AS SOON AS SOME OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY BECOMES FIRST TO ORDER A LARGE U.S. AIRCRAFT LIKE THE 707. EHRENWALD HAS CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT GOC DOESN'T WANT TO BECOME CONSPICUOUS AS FIRST EE PRUCHASER FOR FEAR OF OFFENDING MOSCOW, BUT THAT ONCE ANOTHER COMECON NATION (PROBABLY POLAND, HE EXPECTS, WITHIN NEXT FEW MONTHS) DECIDES TO BUY THERE WILL BE NO OBSTACLE TO A SLOVAIR PURCHASE. A USES 707 WOULD COST AROUND \$5-7 MILLION, PLUS SPARE PARTS.

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2. SLOVAIR WANTS THE 707, HE SAID, TO USE IN "EXPORTING MEAT" TO NORTH AFRICA, INDIA AND OTHER PLACES. IN RESPONSE TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS, EHRENWALD SAID THAT:

(A) AS A DUAL PURPOSE AIRCRAFT, 707 CAN EASILY BE SWITCHED FROM PASSENGER TO CARGO SERVICE AND VICE VERSA;
(B) THE PLANE CAN ALSO BE EASILY CONVERTED FROM ALL- OR PARTY-REFRIGERATED TO NON-REFRIGERATED CARGOES AND VICE VERSA;
(C) TRAINING 707 CREWS AND SERVICING AIRCRAFT WOULD POSE NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR SLOVAIR SINCE LUFTHANSA OR VARIOUS OTHER AIRLINES WITH 707 EXPERIENCE COULD ASSIST THEM ON A CONTRACT BASIS; AND
(D) BOEING IS WILLING TO HEL GOC LOOK FOR NEW EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP COVER HARD CURRENCY COST OF THE PLANE.

EHRENWALD DID NOT REVELA FROM WHERE USED AIRCRAFT MIGHT BE OBTAINED.

3. EHRENWALD SAID HE SEEKS NO EMBASSY ASSISTANCE ON THIS PROJECT BUT JUST WANTED TO KEEP EMBASSY INFORMED. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT BOEING HAS NO PROSPECTS OF SELLING AIRCRAFT TO CSA (THE MAJOR CARRIER), BUT IS DISCUSSING PERIPHERAL PRODUCTS AND TEHCNOLOGIES (WATER PURIFIERS, FIBERGLASS TECHNOLOGY, RAIL CARS) ON A LONG-TERM BASIS WITH THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TECHNOLOGY AND INVESTMENT.

4. COMMENT: SLOVAIR'S NEED FOR A JET CARGO PLANE TO EXPORT MEAT SEEMS FAR-FETCHED. GOC DATA SHOW THAT COUNTRY EXPORTED 121, 33, AND 40 THOUSAND METRIC TONS OF MEAT, INCLUDING LIVE CATTLE, DURING 1972, 1973 AND 1974 RESPECTIVELY, WITH CHINA, HUNGARY, AND THE USSR BEING MAJOR CUSTOMERS. EVEN THOUGH MEAT PRODUCTION IS BEING EXPANDED AND IMPROVED, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE CSSR WILL SOON REQUIRE A 707 TO FLY MEAT TO SOUTH ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND ELSEWHERE. EHRENWALD WENT TO CONSIDERABLE BOTHER TO BRIEF EMBASSY ON THIS DEAL AND FULLY REALIZES THAT THE AIRCRAFT MAY ACTUALLY BE SOUGHT FOR OTHER PURPOSES. EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT TO KEEP TABS ON THIS DEAL.

PERRY

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